

In The Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 16 with the following amended paragraph:

B, Interconnecting elements 20 extend from one end portion 19 of one segment 16 to another end portion 19 of another adjacent segment 16 but not to an oppositely positioned end portion 19 of an adjacent segment 16. Interconnecting elements 20 and adjacent segments 16 form a plurality of cells 24 that change shape upon expansion of the stent. There are at least three struts included between the points on each side of a segment 16 at which an interconnecting element 20 contacts an end portion 19. This results in the interconnecting elements 20 extending in an angular direction between segments around the periphery of the tubular stent. Interconnecting elements 20 are preferably of the same length but may vary from one segment to the other. Also, the diagonal direction may reverse from one segment to another extending upwardly in one case and downwardly in another, although all connecting elements between any pair of segments are substantially parallel. Figure 1, for example shows them extending downwardly, right to left. Upwardly would extend up left to right in this configuration.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

B, The alternate design shown in Figure 4 includes longer struts 18a in the two end segments 16a than in the intermediate segments 16. This allows the end segments (16a) to have less compression resistance than the intermediate segments (16), providing a more gradual transition from the native vessel to the support structure of the stent. The shape of cells 24 near the end of the stent is also modified. Otherwise, the configuration is the same as that shown in Figure 1.